

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

62.07

RUSSWARD

Saintpaulia Growers

629 W. MATTHEWS AVE.

JONESBORO, ARK.

May 1950

Library, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
Washington 25, D.C.

**LIBRARY
RECEIVED**

★ MAY 31 1950 ★

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Section 34.66, P.L.&R.

U. S. POSTAGE

P A I D

Jonesboro, Ark.

PERMIT NO. 86

News Letter

May, 1950

Dear friends:

Last November we devoted this space to bugs, diseases, and abnormal conditions of Saintpaulias. We ran out of that issue long ago, but requests for it have been such that we feel a re-print is in order. You will note that a few items have been added.

FRET TROUBLES

(Don't worry too much
about these)



CHLOROSIS (Ring Spots)—Cold water on foliage, cold drafts, sun shining on wet foliage can all cause leaf marking. Sometimes these markings are in rings, sometimes only a white line which borders the leaf, or they may form all sorts of fantastic designs. Keep cold water away from the foliage, strive for even temperature, and place washed plants in sunlight only after they are thoroughly dry.

CHLOROSIS (Overexposure)—Foliage turns dark, yellowish green, or merely bleaches out to near-white, leaf reverse usually quite red. Leaves may assume a coarse, gnarled appearance. This condition due to continued exposure to strong sunlight.

LEAF BURNS—Dark stewed-looking areas at time of burning will dry up in a few hours to parched spots on leaves or flowers. This condition more often occurs when a plant has been accustomed to a well-shaded location and is suddenly exposed to bright sunshine.

YELLOWED FOLIAGE AND LEGGY GROWTH—Have classed these two abnormalities together to avoid confusion over yellowed foliage caused by strong sun and yellowed foliage caused by no sun at all. One frequently sees plants with long, long stems, with absurdly small pale green leaves at the ends of them. This indicates a need for stronger sunlight and/or better fertilizing. A case of malnutrition, in other words. Get a good commercial fertilizer and follow the directions on the package.

LACK OF BLOOM—A frequent complaint. First, check your sunlight. Violets need as much

light as you would get if you stood in the shade of a big tree at noon on a summer day. They won't bloom on the coffee table in your living room if you leave them there permanently. Not unless you have a glass wall about four feet away. A few extra dollars spent in converting a window into a window-garden for your plants will be money well-spent if you long for blooms. Another common deterrent to good bloom is poor soil. Make this test: Take a handful of the soil you are using. Pack it down in a cup, small glass, flower pot, or other container. Water it thoroughly. Allow to dry. Bone dry. Now. Turn it out on a piece of newspaper. Does it crumble? Good. If it holds its shape, give it a light tap with a knife handle. If it still does not crumble, but, on the other hand, remains a compact, dried mud-pie, then your trouble has been found out. **YOU CAN'T GROW VIOLETS IN CLAY.** Mix enough peat moss, leaf mold, vermiculite, or sand into your soil to give it a loose, porous consistency.

CURLING OUTER FOLIAGE—Try a warmer spot.

STREAKED FLOWERS—(Bud Blast)—If accompanied by white spots which develop into larger blotches on leaf reverse, see **THRIPS**. Sudden temperature changes often cause white streaks which radiate from the center of the blossom to the edge, also some deformity of flowers. Remember to put the windows down on cool nights. Bud blast may be caused by over-fertilizing, low humidity, or leaking artificial gas. Bud blast in double varieties may be combatted by generous fertilizing, extra light.

ROTTING OUTER LEAVES—Accumulations of mineral salts on the rims of pots can cause the decomposition of leaves resting thereon. Coat pot rims with paraffin or devise decorative pot covers with aluminum foil. If these leaves suddenly begin rotting at an alarming rate, (one or two a week), it's probably crown rot.

EARTHWORMS IN POTS—These pests make themselves known by their casts on the surface of the soil and in the saucer. The plant may be turned out of the pot and the critter removed, or water the plant with a solution made by dissolving $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of powdered lime in a quart of water.

CHEWED-LOOKING PLACES—These will occur (or most probably will have already occurred when you buy the plant) down close to the crown on the stems. They are caused by dead flowers dropping down on the plant. In the humid greenhouse atmosphere, these dead flowers decompose and sometimes rot out the delicate stems with which they come in contact. Very rarely happens in a home collection where air is dryer and plants are spaced to allow free circulation of air. Rather unsightly scars but otherwise not important.

~~~~~

**RED LEAF DISEASE**—This is pretty rare, and so far as I know, not particularly dangerous. Pin-head sized rusty-red dots appear on the leaves. May be caused by a fungus of some sort. Remove affected leaves.

**LEAF SPOT (Reverse)**—Though not so rare, this disease also seems not too vicious. Depressed, slick dry spots of indefinite size and shape appear on the reverse of the leaf. They aren't evident at all from the top side. Doesn't seem to be particularly contagious. If the spots bother you, remove affected leaves.

**SPRINGTAILS** — White insects, about the size of the tip end of a fine needle found on the bottom of the pot and in the saucer, also on the soil surface. They float on top of water, jump and/or fly. Move so quickly you can't even see where they disappear to. Harmless. Water the plant with insecticide solution used for spraying to get rid of them.

**BLACK FLIES (or gnats)** — Slightly larger than springtails, winged. These definitely fly. Often present in manures and hence in some soil mixtures. Live on decayed matter. Treat these bugs same as springtails.

### **POTENTIAL PANIC TROUBLES** (Can kill your plants if neglected)

**MEALYBUGS**—Easily recognized by cottony mass (in which eggs are laid) down in the plant or on leaf reverse. Bugs white, flattish, very slow-moving. Young bugs pinkish, pin-head size. Easy to clean up if you only have a few. Swab off with cotton-tipped toothpick dipped in alcohol. Dip badly infected plants in NNOR spray solution.

**DROOPY FOLIAGE**—If plant is limp all over and stays that way even after watering, you probably have a case of crown rot. Slice the crown off at soil level, scrape out all trace of brown matter, and re-root on sand, water, or vermiculite. See below for advanced case. Rots thrive in soggy dirt, roots don't. Water carefully. Remember that the weather can foul you up on this. Be niggardly about watering during damp days of seasons.

**APHIDS** — Rather rare with Saintpaulias. Pale green variety sometimes attack violets. Pin-head size slow-moving sucking insects. Tend to cluster together on stems. Nicotine sulphate will clean up infestations. Sooty mold often forms in the honeydew which this insect secretes. It may be gently scrubbed off with mild soap and water on a piece of cotton.

**CHEMICAL DAMAGE**—A white, gummy substance lightly coats the hairs of the plant stems, and gradually works up into the crown. In ex-

~~~~~

trreme cases, growth stops and the plant dies. This condition is due to the injection of various chemicals into water supply, and may be avoided by using rain water, or water from a cistern.

PANIC TROUBLES

(better get busy)



ADVANCED CROWN ROT—Leaves decompose one by one up the crown. If the violet is a very flat, one-crown job, it can be laid low in 24 hours. Not much you can do if you haven't tended to it at the droopy stage. Save what leaves you can as starts for new plants.

NEMATODES—Microscopic parasitic worms which work their way inside the roots, forming knots and small swellings which you can see if you're curious enough to wash all the dirt off and take a chance on stopping up the kitchen sink. Re-rooting will delay the action on these but sooner or later they'll probably turn up again. Best preventative: sterilizing soil.

CYCLAMEN MITE—Twisted, distorted leaves in center of plant caused by feeding of tiny (invisible to naked eye) insects which prefer tender, young leaves. Best preventative: regular spraying or sodium selenate treatment. Isolate infected plants. No certain cure, but you might try NNOR dip (prepare solution as for spraying, immerse entire plant for about 30 second) or mothball fumigation (for 12 hours, and be SURE your plant is dry.)

THRIPS—Little black bugs size of sharp end of a pin, one-eighth to one-sixteenth of an inch long. Very active. Lay eggs in plant tissue, on violets usually leaf reverse. Recognized as whitish spots which enlarge to dead-looking blotches as eggs hatch and the young feed on the surrounding terrain. The adults prefer the juicy morsels to be found inside the flower buds, and cause such irregularities as streaked flowers, and premature dropping of flowers and buds. Try NNOR dip and keep a sharp eye out for recurrances.

In closing, may I hope that you won't have much need for this issue of the Newsletter? Saint-paulias should, and can be a most delightful hobby. The collector must remember, however, that though the African Violet is the Queen of Houseplants, she is also the most temperate babe in the Garden Encyclopedia. Not too light, not too dark; not too wet, not too dry; not too hot, not too cold. Indeed, we might find a moral lesson in her determined pursuit of the Golden Mean.

“Russ”

PRICE LIST

***AMETHYST, West Coast**—Still far and away the bloomin'est thing we have to offer. Pale lavender blooms in profusion, dark green foliage..... \$1.25

***BI-COLOR**—Upper petals deep red violet, lower lavender. Slick foliage \$1.50

***BLUE BIRD**—Fine medium blue. Improved large medium foliage \$1.50

***BLUE BOY**—Old favorite dark blue..... \$1.25

***BLUE VELVET**—Slightly quilted, pointed leaves, medium dark blue flower. Nice improved habit \$1.50

***BLUSH MAID** — Exquisite shell pink. Foliage like Pink Beauty, bloom much paler..... \$1.50

***BLUSH ORCHID**—One of Mr. Baxter's plants. Pale lavender, Pink Beauty-type foliage. Nice bloomer \$1.50

***BROWN'S DOT**—Our own home-grown plants of this, but we still implore you not to buy it for the "dot", which you have to hunt for at the base of the leaf. It's a fine, sturdy variety with nice habit and generous blooming characteristics. Ovate, slightly-quilted foliage. Dark blue flower \$1.50

***BROWN'S PET**—Neat little miniature Blue Girl. Compact, rosette-type growth, dark blue flowers in profusion \$2.00

***DAINTY MAID**—Pretty little pink. Flower petals quite slender. Small plant, light green foliage \$1.25

***DOUBLE DUCHESS**—Double blue. Fertilize generously to keep the blooms opening. Sport of Blue Boy,—has same foliage \$1.50

***DOUBLE ORCHID**—If you already have "Regal Wine" don't buy this. Twin of Double Duchess with orchid double flower \$1.75

DUPONT HYBRID No. 5—(lighter blue) This plant has certainly been a hit. Pale blue flowers about the shade of Blue Eyes. Mature leaves measure about 4½ inches across. A lulu..... \$2.00

***DUPONT HYBRID SILVER PINK**—Flowers open a rich orchid shade, settling down in about two days to the sparkling "silver pink", or pale lavender-pink. Ready May 15 \$2.00

***KEWENSIS**—To answer the people who say that "African Violets all look alike", you should place a Kewensis beside a DuPont 5. Kewensis looks like a little wild-flower you dug up in the woods someplace. If you're working with seed, this will be particularly valuable to you for hardy, free-blooming, quick-growing characteristics.....\$1.25

***LADY GENEVA**—New. Blue flower with edge around it. Medium green foliage. Lovely.....\$2.25

***LAVENDER LADY**—This comes from the same general family as West Coast Amethyst. Foliage similar, bloom darker,—mid-way between a "red" and a pale lavender\$1.25

***McFARLAND'S BLUE WARRIOR**—(Three-inch plants) If you want to make someone a magnificent present, this is it! Medium pale blue flower, lush dark green foliage\$2.25

***OLD LACE**—Deeply scalloped leaves. Dark blue flowers carried high and profusely. Ready May 15\$1.75

***ORCHID BEAUTY**—The orchid sister of Blue Boy\$1.25

***ORCHID NEPTUNE**—Another newy for us. Same Neptune foliage, orchid flower.....\$1.75

***PERIWINKLE**—These are three-inch size, also. Distinct for the pale reverse of the light blue flower, giving the blossoms a halo effect.....\$2.00

***PINK BEAUTY SUPREME**—(or Pink Amazon) Have had many calls for this, and only have a few. Order early\$1.50

***PURPLE PRINCE**—Magnificent for color. Rich, velvety red-purple with slick, heart-haped foliage\$1.50

***RED BIRD**—Now, kids, to my jaded old eyes, this looks identically like Purple Prince. However, there is some as says different, so am listing it separately this one time.....naturally \$1.50

***RED HEAD**—Rich claret red flowers. Slick, improved foliage. Ready May 15\$1.50

RED KING—All the rage in the East. Distinct for enormous claret-red flowers\$2.00

***ROSALIE**—A red-lavender variety of great merit. Leaves grow to enormous size, quite dark green, troughed and slightly waved. A show plant of easy culture\$1.75

***ROSE PURPLE**—Medium blue flowers with rosy cast. No relation whatsoever to Rosy Blue, which resembles Orchid Beauty. Fine foliage. We guarantee you'll like this one!\$1.75

•••••

***RUFFLES**—I never have any luck getting people to buy this sight un-seen. They just don't believe there could be any such thing. If you've seen a Ruffles at a Violet show, or in your neighbors window, however, you'll want it \$1.75

VON DEITRICH—Impressive new variety with gorgeous foliage. Fast grower, quite large. Medium blue flower. Ready May 15 \$1.75

WHITE LADY—White flowers against medium green foliage \$1.25

* **In bloom.**

-:- GIRL TYPES -:-

We have quite a few of these at present, and it seemed a good idea to list them separately. All have the scalloped, medium green foliage with the white marking at the base of the leaf.

PURPLE GIRL \$1.75
 ***BLUE GIRL** \$1.25
 ***BLUE GIRL SUPREME** (heavy foliage) \$1.50
SAILOR GIRL (Pale blue) \$1.75
RED GIRL \$1.50
LAVENDER GIRL \$1.50
 ***PINK GIRL** \$2.00

* **In bloom.**

Potting Mixture for Violets75
Vermiculite75
Peat Moss85
Sheep Manure35
Sodium Selenate (instructions included)	1.00
Nnor	1.00
Hyponex	1.00
Plastic Wik-Fed Pots (4 inch, ivory only)	1.15
3 for	3.00
6 for	5.50

SHIPPING INFORMATION—Plants shipped in 2 inch pots unless specified otherwise. Cultural instructions included. List price includes packing and mailing cost. **All orders sent special handling.** We guarantee safe arrival of plants. For your own protection, please remit by check or money order. Stamps are quite acceptable for small orders, but please, please, send 1's, 2's, or 3's.

•••••